

September 21, 2007

Meeting America's Real Priorities – Choices Matter

The 110th Congress is taking America in a New Direction -- putting the needs of the American people first and making long-delayed investments in our future, in a fiscally responsible way, using pay as you go with no new deficit spending.

Democrats are leading the fight for America's priorities. The House has passed appropriations bills and a children's health bill that include:

- Better protecting America against terrorism, including 3,500 more firefighter grants than the President;
- Largest increase veterans' health care in history to strengthen quality care for 5.8 million veterans;
- Health coverage for 10 million more children of working families;
- Health care for 1 million more Americans through community health centers;
- Safer roads and bridges, creating American jobs;
- 3,000 more border patrol agents than last year;
- Up to 9,200 more school teachers for quality education for our nation's children;
- Cancer and other life-saving medical research;
- Up to 12,000 additional police officers to combat violent crime; and
- Greater food and toy safety protections.

Republicans are fighting for President Bush's priorities. The Bush Administration has poured more than half a trillion dollars into Iraq, while claiming that we cannot afford to meet key priorities here at home. One week of U.S. spending in Iraq could have given 800,000 children health coverage for a year. Republicans have put tax breaks for the richest of the rich -- imposing more debt for future generations to pay -- ahead of strengthening America's future.

Bipartisan Support

- **All 12 of the House appropriations bills have won bipartisan support:** Eight of 12 bills have won 40 or more Republican votes.
 - Homeland Security 268-150 (45 Republican votes)
 - State-Foreign Operations 241-178 (31 Republican votes)
 - Military Construction/VA 409-2 (185 Republican votes)
 - Energy-Water 312-112 (86 Republican votes)
 - Interior-Environment 272-155 (48 Republican votes)
 - Transportation-HUD 268-153 (43 Republican votes)
 - Commerce, Justice, Science 281-142 (55 Republican votes)
 - Leg Branch 216-176 (14 Republican votes)
 - Financial Services 240-179 (18 Republican votes)
 - Labor HHS 276-140 (53 Republican votes)
 - Agriculture 237-18 (11 Republican votes)
 - Defense 395-13 (187 Republican votes)

The Record of the Last Six Years of Republican Rule

“And if we're smart about how we manage the fiscal budget, it leads to balance, and that's what we have done.” President Bush 9/20/07

From 2001 through 2006, President Bush and the Republican-led Congress presided over the most fiscally irresponsible period in American history and this year's President's budget fails to reach balance, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office.

- **From Surplus to Deficit:** A \$5.6 trillion, 10-year surplus under the Clinton administration became a \$3 trillion, 10-year deficit—a turnaround of more than \$8 trillion.
- **Worst Deficits in History:** President Bush and the Republican-controlled Congress posted the three worst annual deficits in the history of the country -- \$378 billion in 2003, \$413 billion in 2004, and \$318 billion in 2005.
- **America's National Debt Skyrocketed:** The national debt increased from \$5.7 trillion when President Bush was inaugurated in 2001 to almost \$9 trillion today – and increase of 56 percent. The national debt is now \$29,500 for every American. And the White House requested an additional \$850 billion debt ceiling increase this year.
- **Borrowing from Foreign Countries at Record High:** President Bush has borrowed more from foreign nations than all the previous American Presidents combined. Furthermore, 80 percent of the new public debt has been borrowed from foreign creditors – making our fiscal integrity a matter of national security.

The New Direction Congress Is Restoring Fiscal Responsibility

The 110th Congress is taking America in a New Direction, restoring fiscal responsibility and ensuring taxpayer dollars are spent wisely.

- **Pay-as-you-go Budget Discipline Restored:** Within the first 24 hours, the New Direction Congress restored strict budget discipline rules that succeeded in the 1990s in turning record deficits into record surpluses. The Congress has adhered to pay-as-you-go rules, while making investments in children's health care and in energy independence.
- **A Budget that Balances in Five Years:** The new Congress passed a budget that balances by 2012, without raising taxes. By contrast, the President's budget fails to reach balance, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. In two of the last three years, the Republican-led Congress failed to adopt a final budget.
- **Making Tough Choices:** The domestic spending bills make tough choices – cutting lower priority programs so there are resources to reject the President's most harmful cuts and making targeted investments in veterans' care, education, health care, homeland security and law enforcement. They are under FY 2004 spending levels, after adjusting for inflation and population growth.